

**SUSQUEHANNA RIVER BASIN COMMISSION**  
1721 North Front Street • Harrisburg, PA 17102-2391 • [www.srbc.net](http://www.srbc.net)

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
March 16, 2010

**CONTACT:** Susan Obleski  
Director of Communications  
Susquehanna River Basin Commission  
(717) 238-0423, x316 office  
(717) 215-7278 cell

**Three Southern Tier NY and Two Northern Tier PA Counties to  
Receive “Turn Around, Don’t Drown” Signs for Flood-Prone Roads  
Sign Project Is Part of National Flood Safety Awareness Week, March 15-19**

HARRISBURG, Pa. – As part of this week’s National Flood Safety Awareness Week, the Susquehanna River Basin Commission (SRBC) and NOAA’s National Weather Service (NWS) today announced that five counties in southern tier New York and northern tier Pennsylvania will receive road signs alerting drivers to turn around when roads are flooded. According to NWS, more than 50 percent of the fatalities during flood events result from people attempting to drive on flooded roadways.

The road signs read “When Flooded Turn Around Don’t Drown” and will be installed along flood-prone roads. The Susquehanna basin counties receiving the signs are Broome, Steuben and Tioga in New York and Susquehanna and Wyoming in Pennsylvania. A total of 54 signs will be distributed among those counties, which went through an application process.

“The Susquehanna basin is one of the nation’s most flood-prone areas, making flooding an ever-present danger,” said SRBC Executive Director Paul Swartz. “This Turn Around, Don’t Drown signage project is to help save lives. Raging floodwaters are extremely dangerous and vehicles are not a safe haven. It only takes as little as 18 to 24 inches of water to sweep away most vehicles. Lives are tragically and needlessly lost when people become trapped in their floating vehicles and drown.”

The new signs will be installed along roads in the following areas:

Broome County, N.Y. – Binghamton, Conklin, Maine, Vestal and Windsor  
Steuben County, N.Y. – Adian, Campbell, East Campbell, Rathbone and South Corning  
Tioga County, N.Y. – Nichols, Owego, Spencer and Tioga Center  
Susquehanna County, Pa. – Franklin Forks, Hallstead, Lanesboro and New Milford  
Wyoming County, Pa. – Falls, Forkston and Tunhannock

Funding for the Turn Around, Don’t Drown signage project is provided by SRBC and its partners involved in the operation and maintenance of the Susquehanna Flood Forecast and Warning System.

“Floods kill more people nationwide than any other storm-related hazard. This project directly addresses the number one way people die from flood waters: driving into flooded roadways,” said David Nicosia, Warning Coordination Meteorologist, NWS Binghamton. “The intent of these signs is to warn drivers of the dangers of crossing flooded roadways and no doubt will save lives,” Nicosia added.

The 5-day National Flood Safety Awareness Week, which runs through Friday, March 19, is issued by NWS to coincide with the beginning of spring, which is the time of the year when the threat of flooding is generally the greatest – although flooding can occur any time of the year in the Susquehanna River Basin.

Much of the focus of the NWS Flood Safety Awareness Week campaign is Internet-driven <http://www.floodsafety.noaa.gov/>, allowing people to access a wide range of information related to flooding and flood safety programs, including safety tips, and information on flood insurance programs and how to flood proof homes. During each day of the week, a different program is featured.

Since 1986, the Susquehanna Flood Forecasting and Warning System (SFFWS) has provided the data used by the NWS to issue accurate and timely flood watches and warnings to help save lives and reduce flood damages. The SFFWS is credited with reducing damages in the Susquehanna basin by an average of \$32 million each year.

SRBC is supporting a \$2.4 million appropriation request for federal fiscal year 2011. More information on the Susquehanna Flood Forecasting and Warning System is available on the web site at [www.susquehannafloodforecasting.org](http://www.susquehannafloodforecasting.org).

#### **Susquehanna River Basin Commission**

SRBC is the governing agency established under a 100-year compact signed on December 24, 1970, by the federal government and the states of New York, Pennsylvania and Maryland to protect and wisely manage the water resources of the Susquehanna River Basin. The Susquehanna River starts in Cooperstown, N.Y., and flows 444 miles to Havre de Grace, Md., where the river meets the Chesapeake Bay. The SRBC web site is [www.srb.net](http://www.srb.net).

#### **National Weather Service**

NWS provides weather, hydrologic and climate forecasts and warnings for the United States, its territories, adjacent waters and ocean areas, for the protection of life and property and the enhancement of the national economy. NWS data and products form a national information database and infrastructure that can be used by other governmental agencies, the private sector, the public and the global community. The NWS Binghamton office web site is [www.weather.gov/bgm](http://www.weather.gov/bgm).

###